

# Memorandum

**TO:** HONORABLE MAYOR AND  
CITY COUNCIL

**FROM:** Darryl Von Raesfeld

**SUBJECT: FIRE STATION 6 LAND SALE AND**    **DATE:** May 28, 2008  
**FIRE STATION 37/6 OPERATIONS**

Approved



Date 5/29/08

## INFORMATION ONLY

### INTRODUCTION

This Manager's Budget Addendum provides information on the consolidation strategy for Fire Station Nos. 6 and 37 and also responds to questions from District 6 regarding performance impacts associated with the proposed closure and sale of Fire Station 6.

### BACKGROUND

At the City's general election held on March 5, 2002, voters approved Measure O (2002), San José 911, Fire, Police, Paramedic and Neighborhood Security Act, authorizing the City to issue general obligation bonds up to \$159,000,000 to fund public safety projects for the Police and Fire Departments. One of these projects is a new fire station in the Willow Glen/Cambrian area.

Strategically located fire station sites are central to improving response time performance and capability, thus improving fire suppression and emergency medical service (EMS) delivery. Currently, the Fire Department's service to the south Willow Glen/north Cambrian area is not meeting the performance measurement goal of an eight-minute response time. The Fire Department conducted an exhaustive analysis of the Willow Glen/north Cambrian area using its Deccan geographical information system (GIS) deployment software tools to identify a fire station location to improve service levels within the area bounded by Curtner Avenue to the north, Highway 87 to the east, Hillsdale Avenue to the south, and Booksin Avenue to the west.

Based on the results of the analysis, the Fire Department has identified the parking area immediately south of the Willows Senior Center located on 2175 Lincoln Avenue in the Lincoln Glen Park campus as the optimum location for the fire station. This site is optimum not only due to the fact that it is in the preferred service area, but also because it is City owned land and a real estate transaction can involve a non-monetary transfer of properties between the Fire and PRNS departments. The Public Safety bond program has undergone several strategic changes in order to respond to unprecedented market escalation and use of this property would allow us to most cost effectively deliver the project. However, the parking area on the Lincoln Glen Park campus proposed for this project is considered City park land and requires voter approval prior to conversion of the long-term use of the land. The fire station construction ballot measure is

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currently scheduled for the November 4, 2008 election and voter approval is required prior to the start of design activities.

As discussed in the 2008-2012 Adopted Capital Improvement Program (CIP), project cost escalations had significantly impacted the Public Safety Bond Program in its ability to deliver projects within the bond budget. In order to bridge the budget shortfall for Fire Station 37 as well as simultaneously realize operating and maintenance savings, a strategy to consolidate Fire Station Nos. 6 and 37 was presented to and approved by Council in the 2008-2012 Adopted CIP. The Proposed 2009-2013 CIP continues to recommend this same strategy. The anticipated sale of the Fire Station 6 property (estimated at \$800,000) will augment the funding for the Public Safety Bond projects, including the construction of Fire Station 37.

The service delivery analysis predicts an overall service level improvement of five percent within Fire Station 6's first due district through the redeployment of resources from Station 6 to Station 37. While overall performance in Station 6's district will improve, some areas closer to existing Station 6 will experience a reduction in performance. The planned implementation of traffic signal pre-emption and the deployment of a Supplemental Transport Ambulance Resource (STAR) are anticipated to mitigate these impacts and result in service levels consistent with Council-adopted objectives in these areas.

## **ANALYSIS**

The following are the responses to Council District 6's questions related to Fire Station 6 and 37:

**Q1 Was the proposed sale of the Fire House Six (land) included in the Fire Department's Strategic Plan that was presented to the City Council before the City moved forward with the Bond request that was proposed to the voters?**

**A1** The 2000 Strategic Plan recommended the construction of a new fire station in the Willow Glen/Cambrian area. Furthermore, published voter information pertaining to "Measure O" listed the Willow Glen/Cambrian area as one of 10 potential new fire station locations. Neither document recommended the closure or relocation of Station 6. The sale of Fire Station 6 was chosen as a budget balancing strategy and included in the C&C revenue forecast as part of the 2008-2012 Adopted CIP to help augment funding for the Public Safety Bond projects, including the construction of Fire Station 37.

**Q2 Please provide the current data from the Fire Department regarding Fire House 6 response time to the current area that the Fire House responds to.**

**A2** Overall, response time performance within Fire Station 6 current first due area achieved the 8:00 minute objective 75.2 percent of the time for FY 2006 – 2007. The district's performance is 4.8 points below the Council-adopted goal of 80 percent. The City-wide performance for this same time period was 79 percent. At the 80<sup>th</sup> percentile, Station 6's first due district performance is 8:17 minutes or exceeds the performance objective of 8:00 minutes by 17 seconds.

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The poorest performing areas within Fire Station 6's first due districts are within the southern portions of the district or the Cambrian area. This area is between Curtner Avenue to the north, Highway 87 to the east, Hillsdale Avenue to the south and Booksin Avenue to the west. The poorer performance within this region reduces the overall performance of the district and was the basis for the 2000 Strategic Plan's Willow Glen/Cambrian fire station construction recommendation.

**2a. According to this specific data only (not including the Fire Departments request to purchase technology or any other changes/additions) would the area currently being responded to by Fire House 6 be compromised if Fire House Six was closed?**

Performance modeling, using the Fire Department's deployment software, predicts response time performance declines within Station 6's current district if Fire Station 6 were to be closed.

**2b. Would the response time to the current area that Fire House Six responds to be compromised and/or change if Fire House Six was closed and Fire House 37 opened? (not including the Fire Departments request to purchase technology or any other changes/additions)**

Performance modeling, using the Fire Department's deployment software, predicts an overall service level improvement of five percent within Fire Station 6's first due district through the redeployment of resources from Station 6 to Station 37, with especially dramatic improvements in the southern regions of Station 6's current district. While overall performance in Station 6's district is anticipated to improve, some areas adjacent to existing Station 6 will experience a reduction in performance to and below Council-adopted objectives. The planned implementation of traffic signal pre-emption and the deployment of a Supplemental Transport Ambulance Resource (STAR) are anticipated to mitigate these impacts and result in service levels consistent with Council-adopted objectives in these areas.

The Fire Department is currently collaborating with the Department of Transportation on plans to install new traffic signal pre-emption systems along Lincoln, Leigh, Fruitdale and Meridian Avenues that are anticipated to improve fire engine response time performance by controlling traffic signals along their travel routes. The evaluation of the effectiveness of traffic signal pre-emption would begin after voter approval of the alternative use of land at Willows Senior Center for Fire Station 37 in November 2008. Evaluation of the effectiveness of the independent response of Department STAR units to selected EMS incident types will begin with the demolition and reconstruction of Fire Station 2, scheduled for this summer.

Coverage efficiency (e.g., square miles per station district covered within response time performance objectives) of Stations 4 and 30 improve with the absorption of a portion of current Station 6's first due area. The construction of Station 37 results in a

first due coverage area that is more symmetrical in shape, further improving coverage efficiency in the area.

Thus, the projected performance improvements associated with the relocation of Station 6's resources would also improve the coverage efficiency of Station 4, northwest of current Station 6 and Station 30, northeast of current Station 6, while contributing to the overall five percent (5%) improvement within Station 6's current district.

**Q3 When was the decision to sell — not reconsolidate the fire stations — but the actual selling of Fire House 6 made? Did meetings between city departments take place? Outreach to community? etc?**

**A3** During the development of the 2008-2012 Proposed CIP in spring 2007, the Fire Department met with the Public Works Department and City Manager's Office staff to discuss an identified shortfall between the engineer's estimates of Public Safety Bond projects, including Fire Station 37 construction. In the absence of alternative funding sources, a strategy was reached to consolidate Fire Station 6 and the proposed new Fire Station 37 at the Willows Senior Center, subject to voter approval. This included the sale of Fire Station 6, estimated at \$800,000 to create a source of funding to bridge the identified funding gap. This strategy was chosen to balance the projected construction cost escalation while maintaining the maximum scope possible in the overall Public Safety Bond Program and was incorporated into the 2008-2012 Adopted CIP. The consolidation strategy was briefly discussed in the September 25, 2007 and May 6, 2008 Citywide Capital Improvement Program and Strong Neighborhoods Initiative Reports.

Community outreach and potential project timeline:

Spring 2007:	Budget development for the 2008-2012 CIP
March 27, 2008:	Community meeting regarding new Fire Station 37 and the consolidation with Fire Station 6
April 10, 2008:	Community meeting regarding Fire Station 37/6.
May 7, 2008:	Parks and Recreation Commission meeting – informational item regarding the use of Willows Senior Center for Fire Station 37
May 21, 2008:	Parks and Recreation Commission meeting – approved staff's recommendation for the use of Willows Senior Center for Fire Station 37
May 21, 2008:	Public Safety Bond Citizen Oversight Committee - approved staff's recommendation for the use of Willows Senior Center for Fire Station 37 with the caveat that the closure or reconfiguration of Fire Station 6 be considered by the committee at a future time.
June 19, 2008:	Council hearing to approve the fire station construction on Lincoln Glen Park ballot measure to be included in the November 4, 2008 election

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The final determination regarding the sale of Fire Station 6 will be dependent on the outcome of an analysis regarding the effectiveness of STAR units and the traffic signal pre-emption systems in enabling Fire Department resources to achieve service level objectives within affected areas.

If Fire Station 6 were to remain operational, the operation and maintenance costs are projected to be approximately \$28,000 annually and consist of the following:

- **Utility costs – Approximately \$11,400/yr**  
This includes gas and electric at \$8,900/yr, water at \$1,430/yr, and garbage at \$1,050/yr
- **Annual Maintenance Costs - \$17,000**  
Fire Station 6 is a 5,700 square foot building that was built in 1963. Based on the last condition assessment, the overall condition of the building is at 2.8, slightly less than average, on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being the poorest condition. Staff is currently in the process of doing an updated assessment, however, at this time, an annual cost of about \$17,000 a year for corrective and preventive maintenance is projected for this building.

The costs identified above are not assumed as part of the 2009-2013 General Fund Forecast. It should also be noted that the 2009-2013 General Fund Forecast includes additional resources for a secondary paramedic response apparatus (one line position [3.5 FTEs]) under the assumption that the fire engine at Fire Station 6 would be redeployed to Fire Station 37. The fiscal impact of additional staffing (approximately \$2.0 million to convert the secondary paramedic response apparatus to a Fire Engine [three line positions or 10.5 FTEs]), if required based on further analysis and testing of this strategy, is not assumed in the 2009-2013 General Fund Forecast.

**Q4 [Provide] an itemize list (detailed description) of what the 5 million currently being proposed for Fire House 37 will be used on — all proposed costs etc (as specifically as possible) of how the current proposal of five million + is intended on being used on Fire House 37. Please include the funding sources — bond money, etc.**

**A4** Fire Station 37 is proposed to be an approximately 7,000 square-foot single company station with augmented staffing (STAR unit) and includes improvements on a ¾ acre site. To accommodate the additional crew, this facility would be approximately 600 square-feet larger than a single company station. The construction cost of the station is estimated at \$4.7 million with delivery costs estimated at \$1.9 million. The building and site improvements will be constructed to meet the 2007 California Building Code (CBC) requirements for an Essential Facility. The facility will also be designed to the same Fire Department's 2004 master Fire Facility Program criteria for operations, privacy, safety and durability that has been employed in the design and construction of other new and relocated fire stations in the bond program. These same program criteria governing the size, features, quality of new fire stations were re-validated in January 2007 by a third party consultant who had been tasked with identifying opportunities for value engineering and scope reductions to address regional construction cost increases.

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In the Proposed 2009-2013 CIP, Fire Station 37 is proposed to be funded with \$5.4 million from Neighborhood Security Act Bond Fund and \$1.1 million from Fire Construction and Conveyance (C&C) Tax Fund for a total of \$6.5 million. The current funding strategy relies on Fire C&C to fund \$800,000 for the construction of the project. Upon completion of Fire Station 37 and the determination that service level supporting measures were successful, the closure and sale of Fire Station 6 would produce \$800,000 of revenue to the Fire C&C Tax Fund. In the event the sale of Station 6 does not occur, supplemental funding of \$800,000 would need to be identified to bridge the shortfall that would result in the Fire C&C Tax Fund for the other Public Safety Fire-related bond projects.

**Q5 [Provide] an itemized list of city money or (other funding) that provided the “upgrades” “re-models,” etc. for Fire House 6 since 1998: the amount and what was done.**

**A5** While various maintenance and facility improvement projects have been completed on Fire Station 6 since 1998, the lack of Fire Department records automation prevented the retrieval and accounting of all but the most recent improvements to the station. However, additional data may be made available given additional time and staff resources to research this item.

Based on currently available data, it is estimated that approximately \$130,000 have been spent to:

• Remodel the station kitchen	\$100,000
• Retrofit the station with copper plumbing	\$20,000
• <u>Misc. repairs (1998 – 2008)</u>	<u>\$10,000</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$130,000</b>

**Q6 Is there a city policy that states that when the city wants to sell land that is home to a fire house that it needs to go to a vote of the public? Do we know why or “why not” a policy does or does not exist? For example, currently, when park land is going to be used for another use besides a park, the proposed use needs to go to a vote of the people for approval; like with the use of park land for Fire House 37.**

**A6** City Charter Section 1700 requires a vote of the people to approve the conversion of the long-term use of park land. There is no City policy that requires a voter referendum to sell a City-owned fire station; however, the City Charter does require public noticing regarding significant changes in service levels of City services.

In general, Council policy dictates that proceeds from the sale of surplus property are deposited in the General Fund Economic Uncertainty Reserve (unless specifically approved by Council – eg. Corta De Rosa property for the Substation award). However, the City Council approved with Manager’s Budget Addendum #8 (dated May 17, 2004) a strategy that directed proceeds from surplus fire station properties to support Public Safety Bond projects and Furniture, Fixtures, and Equipment and Apparatus for Fire

Stations. A copy of that memo can be found at:  
<http://www.sanjoseca.gov/budget/FY0405/mba/mba08.pdf>

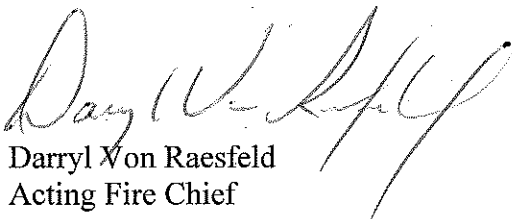
### **EVALUATION AND FOLLOW UP**

As discussed above, the augmentation and relocation of Fire Station 6's resources to new Fire Station 37 was proposed to improve the overall effectiveness and efficiency of emergency response resources within the Willow Glen/Cambrian area based on evaluation of available data and projected outcomes through the modeling analysis. Further evaluation will be undertaken to ensure that the outcome of this strategy will be to improve service delivery as intended, prior to the sale of Fire Station 6.

Listed below are some milestones that would need to be completed in order to successfully implement the consolidation strategy:

<b>Action</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
Voter approval for use of parkland for Fire Station 37	November 2008
Complete data collection and analysis from the proposed traffic signal pre-emption	August 2009
Complete STAR car evaluation	August 2009
Evaluation to be presented to Council	FY 2010-2014 Budget Process
Completion of Fire Station 37	August 2011
Possible sale of Fire Station 6	2012

Questions may be addressed to the Geoff Cady, Acting Deputy Director, Fire Department, at 277-8783.

  
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